Unani Medicine, Bangalore. This includes Rs. 2.50 crores spent on the construction of 1st phase of the building currently in progress.

(b) and (c) Standing Finance Committee approved 1st phase of the Institute at a cost of Rs. 14.00 crores during 9th Plan which includes facilities for starting Post-graduation in four subjects including a 100-bedded hospital. The 1st phase is expected to be fully operational in the academic Session 2003-2004 when educational activities in all the four subjects are likely to start.

Improvement in Medical Health Care Services

797. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the concrete steps taken or proposed by his Ministry for the improvement in Medical Health Care Services in the country in the context of current global threat of bio-terrorism; and

(b) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. C.P. THAKUR): (a) and (b) A Statement is laid on the Table of the Rajya Sabha.

Statement

Actions taken by the Government for the improvement in medical health care services in the country in the context of current global threat of bio-terrorism.

(i) A detailed list of biological and chemical agents used as weapons prepared by the Indian Council of Medical Research along with signs and symptoms, likely method of dissemination, incubation period, lethality and the availability of vaccines, anti-microbial therapy and treatment has been circulated to all the States and Union Territories and Central Government hospitals in order to take precautionary steps such as earmarking of maximum number of beds for emergency contingency, stocking of vaccines/sera/drugs to the extent possible, setting up a special team of doctors for coordinated action and sensitise them on the impact of such weapons and treatment measures.

(ii) A national workshop was conducted at the NICD in September 2001 for developing surveillance mechanism for pathogens with biological warfare potential including that of anthrax.

(iii) An issue of CD alert (monthly Newsletter of NICD) on bio-terrorism with special reference to anthrax was circulated in October, 2001 to all the concerned health authorities in different States and Union Territories. The issue also covered the guidelines to be followed during biological war/terrorism and effective handling of suspicious envelops/package.

(iv) Guidelines for packaging, transportation of clinical specimens and processing protocol in laboratories were circulated to all the Medical Colleges in the country.

(v) A meeting on chemical and bio-terrorism was organized on 29th October, by the Department of Health which was participated by the Secretaries of Home & Health, Director of Health Services from various States/Union Territories. The representatives from the States informed the preparatory measures taken by them and assured availability of drugs in adequate quantity to tackle any situation. Drugs like Penicillin, Ciprofloxacin, Doxycycline, Amoxycillin are recommended for medical therapy for patients suffering from Anthrax infection. A large number of manufacturers in India are marketing these drugs and are available in all corners of the country.

(vi) National Institute for Communicable Diseases, Delhi has been identified as the nodal agency for investigations of any specimen suspected for anthrax.

(vii) A round the clock control room is functioning at NICD from 19th October, 2001 where suspected envelops/packages are being received for tests.

Action against charitable hospitals

798. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have warned of strict action against all charitable hospitals not adhering to their promise of providing a certain percentage of free services in lieu of the land provided to them at token or institutional price;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps Government have, so far, taken or propose to take against such erring hospitals?